

# Language Assessment

## What you need to know



Language Assessment Information for Clients



Centre for  
Canadian Language  
Benchmarks

Centre des niveaux de  
compétence linguistique  
canadiens

## Why Was This Guide Created?

This guide was created to tell you what happens when you have a language assessment. It will also tell you what you have to do before your assessment and what happens after you have been assessed.

Language assessment is important because it helps you get into free English or French language classes. These classes help you improve your language skills which can help you live and work in Canada.

If you need more information, please speak to a language assessor at an Assessment Centre. An Assessment Centre is a place where you have your language assessment.



The material in this guide is available for use by stakeholders in the government-funded language assessment and training system. Information may be printed, copied, and distributed to clients and others as needed. The guide is also available for those with access to HARTs at <https://www.hartssystem.ca/docs/assessmentguide2023EN.pdf>

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# What You Need to Know Before the Assessment

## What is an assessment?

An assessment is a tool that measures your English or French language ability. It is not a test that you pass or fail.

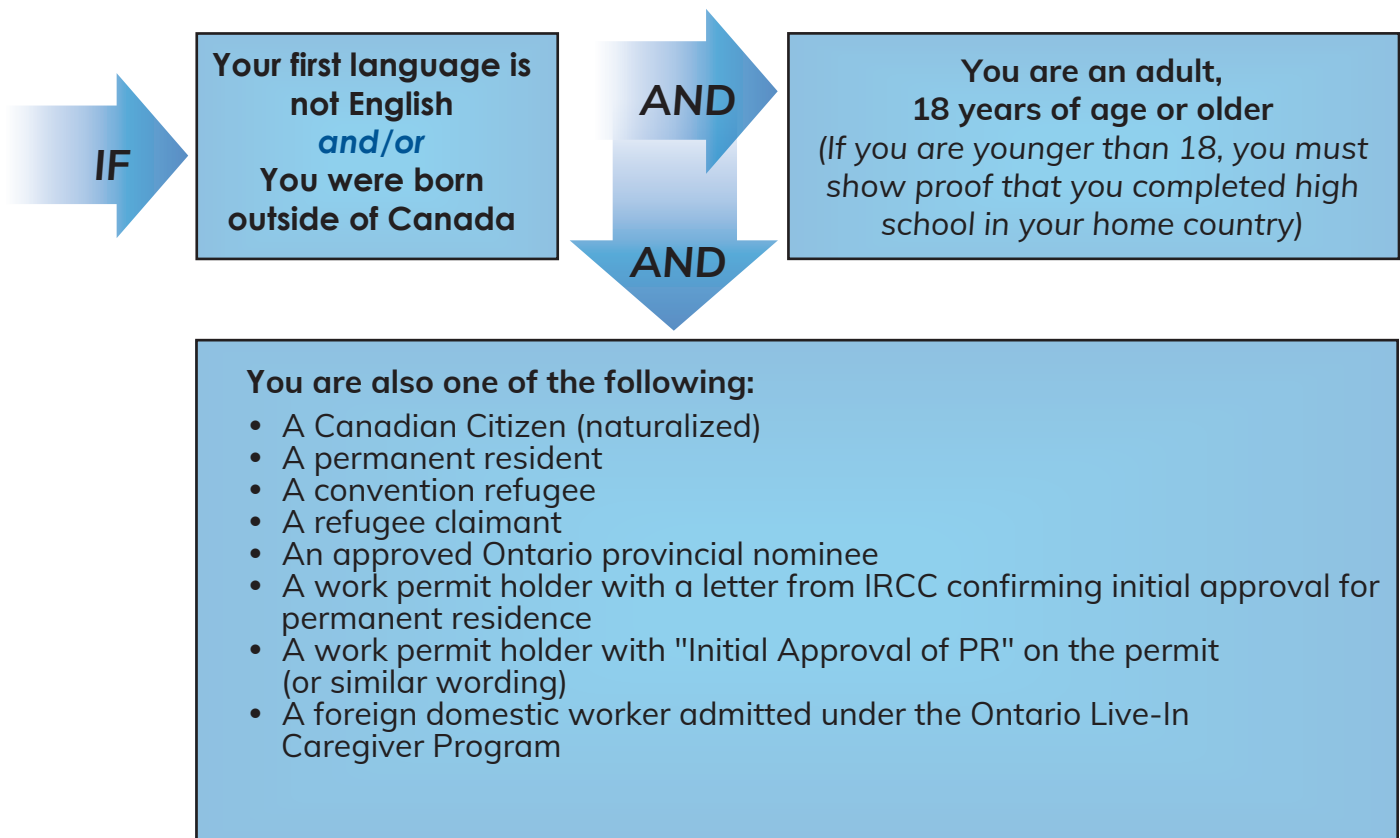
## Why Do I Need An Assessment?

The assessment tells how well you can listen, speak, read and write in English or French. It helps the language assessor decide what program is best for you and place you in the right class.

You must make an appointment to take the assessment at an Assessment Centre before you can join a language class. A certified language assessor gives you the assessment. The assessment may take you 1.5 to 4 hours to complete. Elderly or retired immigrants, including newcomers, may also be assessed. If you have special needs or a disability, please let the Assessment Centre know before you arrive for your appointment so they can help you.

## Can I have a free language assessment?

You can have a free language assessment if you qualify.



**If your first language is English, you may have an assessment depending on your immigration status. Please contact the Assessment Centre for more information.**

Canadian born citizens, visitors, international students, and work permit holders cannot have a free language assessment.

## What immigration document must I bring to my assessment?

Your immigration document is proof that you can have an assessment. If you arrive for your assessment without your document, you will **not** be assessed.

You must bring an original document. The Assessment Centre will not accept a photocopy. Your document has to show who you are. If a picture of you is not on your document, you must also bring identification (ID) that has your picture. You may also be asked to bring proof that you live in Ontario (for example your Ontario Driver's license or your Ontario Health card).

### You must bring one of the following documents to your assessment:

**Permanent Resident (PR) Card**

or

**Confirmation of Permanent Residence document and Passport**

or

**Convention Refugee** documents and photo ID if needed

or

**Government Assisted Refugee (GAR)**

or

**Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR)** documents and photo ID if needed

or

**Canadian Citizenship Card / Certificate, or a Canadian Passport**

or

**Approved Provincial Nominee** documents and photo ID if needed

or

**Refugee Claimant** documents and photo ID if needed

or

**Work Permit Holder** documents

or

**Live-In Caregiver Program** documents and photo ID if needed or  
**Record of Landing**

or

**Approved in Principal Letter**

or

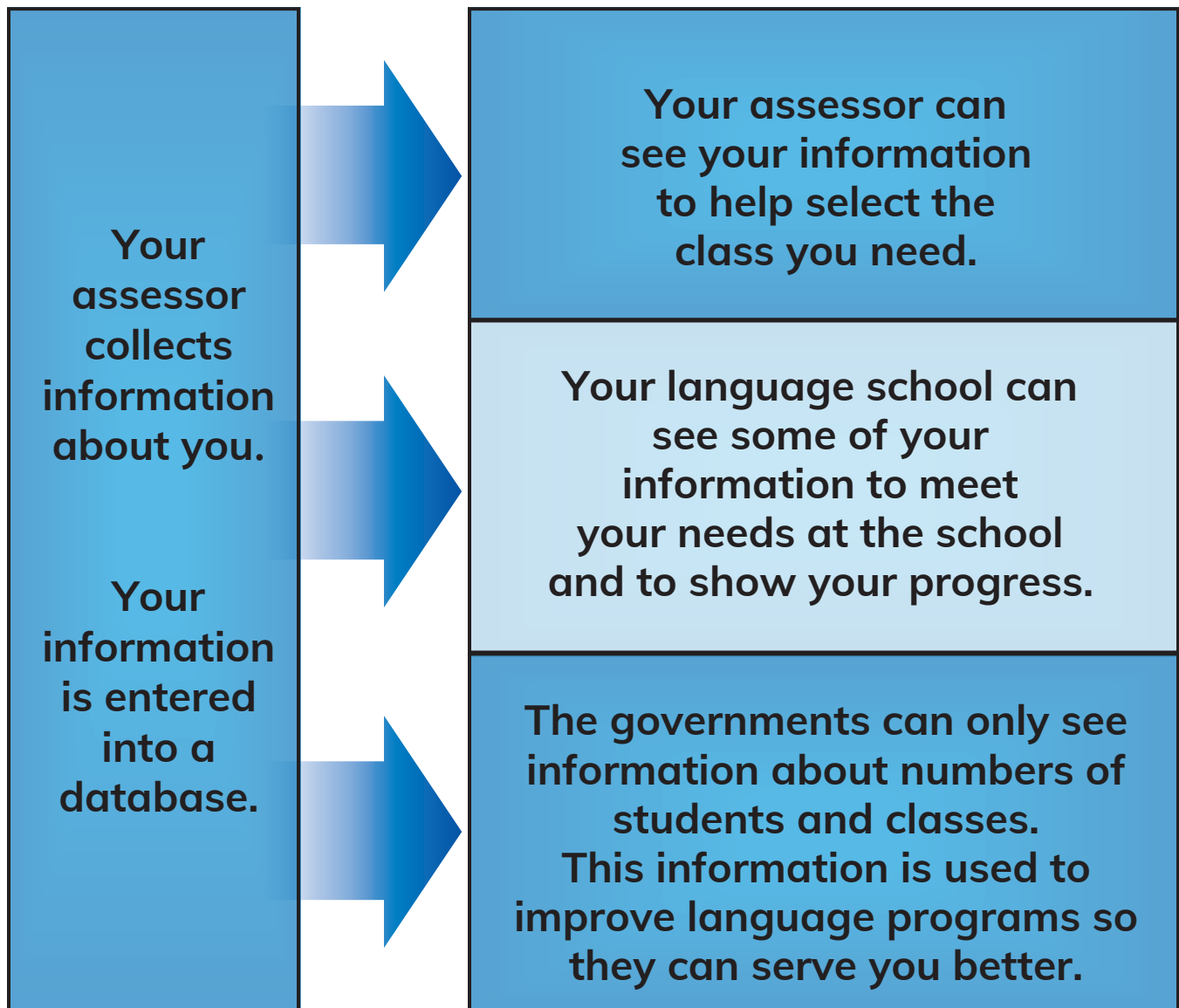
**Initial Approval of Application of Permanent Resident Letter**

## Do you keep personal information about me?

Yes. The government that supports language assessment tells the Assessment Centre what information to get from you and to store it securely.

Your assessor will ask questions to get information about you. This information may be used to help place you in the programs or services that meet your needs.

## Who can see and use my personal information?



*Your information is not available to everyone. It is kept confidential and protected by privacy laws. If you agree, the government may contact you to see if the classes have helped you.*



### **Can I take classes if I am getting Employment Insurance?**

Employment Insurance (EI) must agree to let you take classes before you can begin.

### **How can I study for the assessment?**

You do not need to study for the assessment. Your assessment shows what you can do in English or French on the day you are assessed. It is based on tasks you may have to do in real life. It is not a test.

### **Is care for my child available?**

Care for newcomer children (CNC) is available at some Assessment Centres when you are using their services. You must remain at the centre when your child or children are being looked after.

If you need care for your children during your language class, please talk to your assessor. Care may be available for some classes.

# What You Need to Know During the Assessment

## What assessment will I be given?

Your assessor will choose the best language assessment for you. There are different assessments that serve different needs and purposes. All assessments at the Assessment Centres measure your listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English and/or French. These assessments are based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), or the Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens (NCLC).

Your assessor will give you a report with the results of your language assessment after you have completed all the required tasks (usually on the same day). The report will list your Benchmark for each of the four skills.

No electronic devices (such as cell phones and dictionaries) may be used in the assessment room.

## CLBA and CLBPT \*

These assessments are used to place you in language classes or programs. They can take you 1.5 hours to 4 hours to complete. Your assessment results will be given to you as Benchmarks from 1 to 8.

## BTC-NCLC

BTC-NCLC (Batterie de tests de classement aux Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens), is a Canadian French language assessment. It is used for French language programs that are supported by the governments. Results are reported as Benchmarks from NCLC 1 to 8. Please ask your Assessment Centre for more information on French language assessment or go to [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca) to learn more about the NCLC.

## ELTPA and WLA \*

These assessments are used to place internationally trained professionals and trades people in work-related language training programs. They measure English language skills with tasks that are work-related. Your ELTPA assessment results will be given to you as Benchmarks from 6 or lower to 10 or higher. Your WLA assessment results will be given to you as Benchmarks from 7 to 10.

You must be given the CLBA or CLBPT assessment **BEFORE** you can take the ELTPA or WLA assessment. You must also have a Benchmark 6 or higher recorded in the HARTs database before you can take the ELTPA or WLA assessment.

## CLBA-LL and CLB-LPT and BTC-AMA \*

These assessments are used to place you in literacy classes. The CLBA-LL and CLB-LPT measure your basic ability to read and write in English, and you may also do some tasks in your first or preferred language. The BTC-AMA measures your literacy in French.

\*HARTs – The database where your personal and assessment history is stored.

\*CLBA – Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment

\*CLBA-LL – Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment for Literacy Learners

\*CLB-LPT – Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy Placement Test

\*BTC-AMA – Batterie de tests de classement pour adultes moins alphabétisés

\*CLBPT – Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test

\*ELTPA – Enhanced Language Training Placement Assessment

\*WLA – Workplace Language Assessment

## What does “literacy” mean?

Literacy means your ability to read and write in your first language, and/or in English, or French.

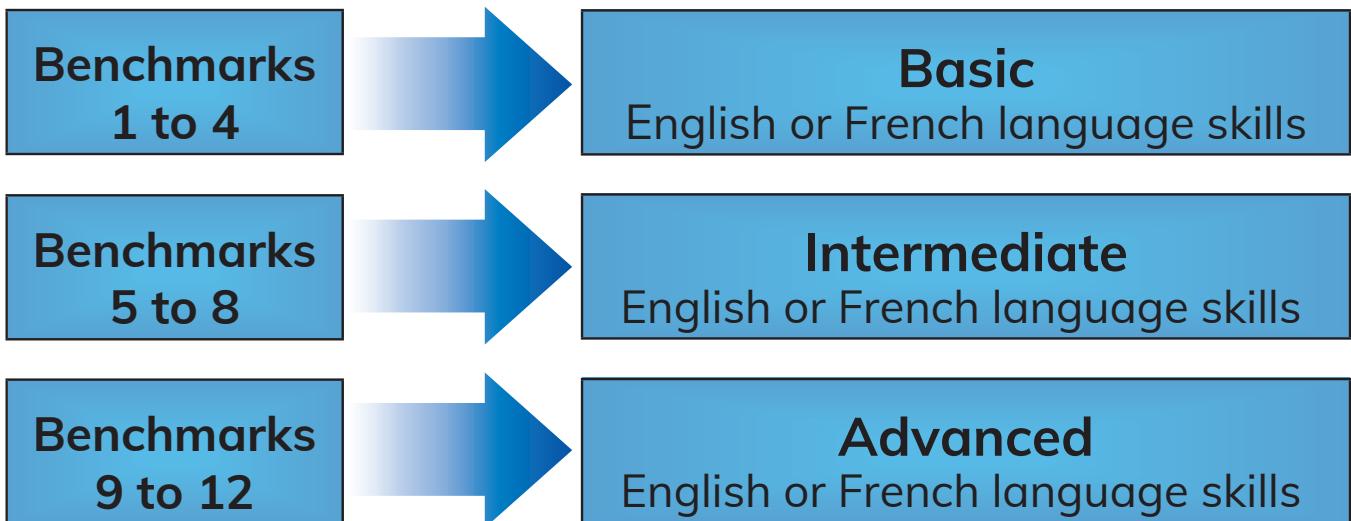
## What are the Canadian Language Benchmarks?

The Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) are used in Canada to describe the English language ability of adult immigrants. They include examples of real life language tasks for living and working in Canada.

There are 12 Benchmarks for each language skill (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). The highest Benchmark you can get at an Assessment Centre is 10+. A 10+ means that you have achieved a Benchmark 10 or higher.

## What do my assessment Benchmarks mean?

Your Benchmarks tell us what you can do in English or French. Benchmarks that are high usually mean a high English or French skill level. Your Benchmark results may be different for each of your four skills.



## Can I use my language assessment Benchmark results when I apply for Canadian citizenship?

You cannot use your Assessment Centre assessment results to apply for Canadian citizenship. Your LINC, CLIC, ESL or FSL school can give you a Language Training certificate to show you have completed your class and Benchmark levels. You can use this certificate when you apply for citizenship. Your certificate must show at least Benchmark 4 in Listening and Speaking to apply for citizenship.

There are other language tests that you can take for citizenship. These tests are not given at the Assessment Centre.

For more information please go to <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/canadian-citizenship/become-canadian-citizen/eligibility/language-proof.html>

## What Benchmarks do I need to attend college and university?

Your Assessment Centre results are not for placement in a college or university program in Ontario. Contact the college or university you want to attend so that they can give you their language requirements.

# What You Need to Know After the Assessment

## What classes can I take?

Your assessor will talk to you about what classes you can take. Your assessor will work with you to find a class that meets your needs.

## What is the difference between LINC and ESL?

LINC classes are supported by the Government of Canada. LINC means Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada. ESL classes are supported by the Ontario government. ESL means English as a Second Language.

LINC and ESL have different rules for taking language classes. Your assessor will tell you if you can take LINC, ESL or both. For French language programs your assessor refers you to CLIC\* or FSL\* classes.

## What is the difference between “referred to class” and “registered for class”?

Your language assessor “refers” you to a class. A seat is held for you because you have been referred to that class. You will then have to “register” for the class at the school. When you register for class, the school will record your information so you can attend their classes.

## Can I take more than one class?

- You can be referred to **more than one class** if your classes are at different times.  
*And / Or*
- You can be referred to **different language programs** if they are at different times.

## How fast can I move to a higher benchmark?

Your teacher, and your work in class, will determine how fast you are moved to the next benchmark.

## What if I cannot go to class?

Sometimes you cannot go to class. You may have small children to look after, changing work hours, or have no transportation. Your assessor can talk with you about other options for language learning.

## Will I get help with transportation?

Speak to the school where you will be taking your classes. They can tell you if you can get help with transportation costs. Some schools may provide bus tickets.

\*CLIC – Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada (French equivalent to LINC)

\*FSL – French as a Second Language

## What is a waitlist?

A waitlist is a list of names in order of priority. Your name may be placed on a waitlist while you wait for an available seat in the class you want to attend.

## Will I be put on a waitlist?

Your assessor will put your name on a waitlist if:

- the class you want to take is full, or
- you need childcare and it is not available

Your name stays on a waitlist until there is a place for you in the class you want. You can be on a waitlist for up to six months. The school or program provider will call you to tell you when you can start the class, or when childcare is available. If you are not called to start a class, and you have been waiting for six months, you may call the school or your assessor to talk about other options.

## How does the waitlist work?

Your immigration status will determine how you are placed on the waitlist. Also, if you have taken classes before, new students will be put in class before you. This is done so that everyone who needs language training can get into a class at least once.

<b>How the Waitlist Works</b>			
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>You Are a GAR or PSR</b>	<b>Placed First Ahead of All Others</b>	Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) are placed in class ahead of all others on the waitlist.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>You Are a New Student</b>	<b>Placed After GARS and PSRs</b>	If you are a new student, you are placed in class after GARs and PSRs have been placed. You are placed before returning students and transferring students.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>You Are a Returning Student</b>	<b>Placed After New Students</b>	If you are a returning student, you are placed in class after new students have been placed.
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>You Are a Transferring Student</b>	<b>Placed After Returning Students</b>	If you want to transfer to a different class, it is sometimes possible. You can transfer only if there is a place for you after returning students have been placed.

## Can I take English and French classes?

Your assessor will look at your information and tell you if you can take English classes, French classes or both. You will need to have an English assessment to take English classes, and a French assessment to take French classes. Talk to your assessor first about what you want to do.

## What other language programs are available?

There may be other options for language training available to you. Most other programs that are not LINC or ESL have higher Benchmark requirements. You must meet those requirements before you can be considered for the program.

Some programs that give you workplace language training are listed below. These programs may also provide job placements and other information to help you find work. For more information about these programs, please contact an Assessment Centre. You must have benchmark 6 in all skills to take most of these courses.

### ELT

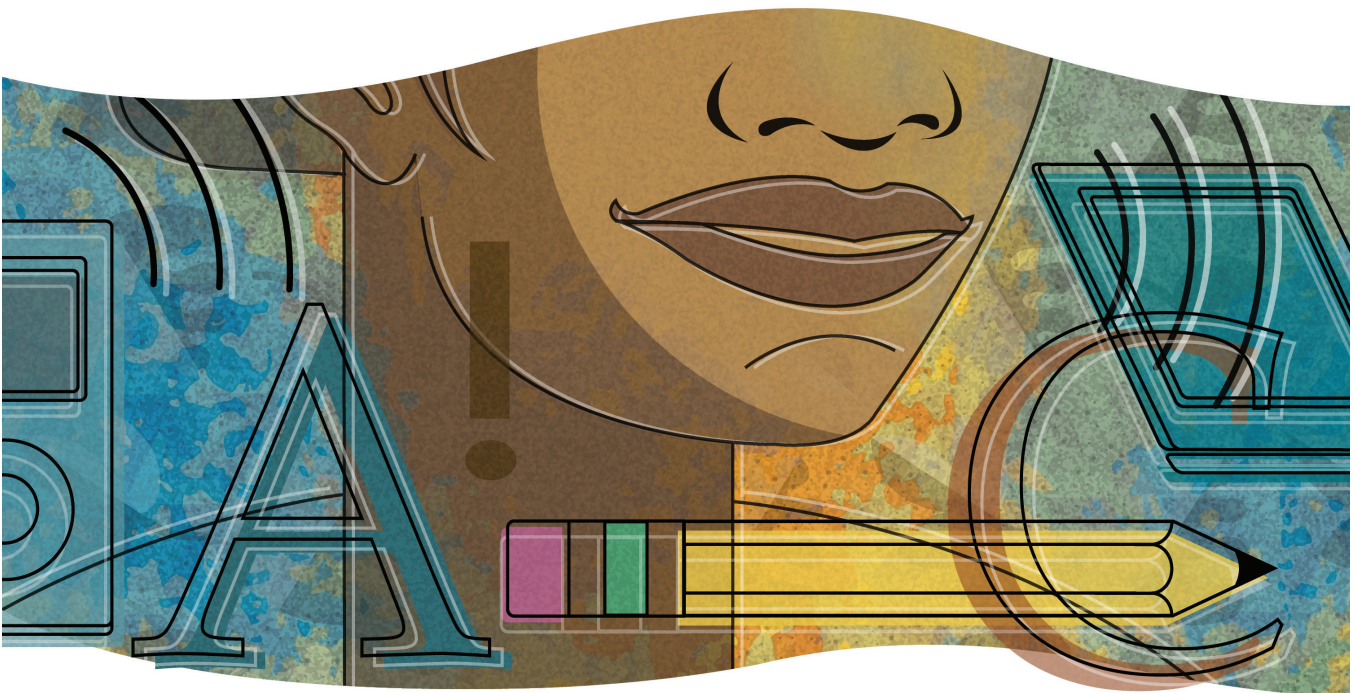
Enhanced Language Training (ELT) teaches you about Canadian workplace culture and the language used in the workplace.

### OSLT

Occupation-specific Language Training (OSLT) is delivered by colleges and teaches you about Canadian workplace culture and the English (or French) language used in certain jobs or professions.

### Bridging Programs

Bridging programs may help skilled immigrants get training, experience and a Canadian license in a regulated profession. They may also help immigrants get work in regulated and other related jobs.



## Why do I have to be assessed again?

The Assessment Centre or an assessor can tell you if you need a new assessment.

### You must have a new assessment if:

- you have been out of a language training program for one year or more. OR
- you did not attend a language training program after you were assessed, and one year or more has passed.

One year is a long time to be out of a language training program or class. Your Benchmarks may have changed during this time, or since your last assessment. It is important for the assessor to have your new Benchmarks so that you can be placed in class at the level that is best for you now.

## Will I be given the same assessment each time I am assessed?

Your assessor will decide what assessment is best for you. You may be given the same assessment or a different one, based on your needs at the time.

## Where do I have my new assessment?

You can have a new assessment at any Assessment Centre or site.

If you move to a new city, contact a local Assessment Centre to find out about language classes close to where you live. The assessor at the Assessment Centre will also tell you if you must have an assessment before you can start classes.



## What Do These Letters Mean?

- BTC-AMA** – Batterie de tests de classement pour adultes moins alphabétisés  
**BTC-NCLC** – Batterie de tests de classement - Niveaux de compétence linguistique canadiens  
**CCLB** – Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks  
**CLB** – Canadian Language Benchmarks  
**CLBA** – Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment  
**CLBA-LL** – Canadian Language Benchmarks Assessment for Literacy Learners  
**CLB-LPT** – Canadian Language Benchmarks Literacy Placement Test  
**CLBPT** – Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Test  
**CLIC** – Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada  
**ELT** – Enhanced Language Training  
**ELTPA** – Enhanced Language Training Placement Assessment  
**ESL** – English as a Second Language  
**FSL** – French as a Second Language  
**GARs** – Government Assisted Refugees  
**HARTs** – History of Assessments, Referrals and Training System. This is the database where learner information is stored.  
**IRCC** – Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
**LINC** – Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada  
**MLITSD** -- Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training & Skills Development  
**OSLT** – Occupation Specific Language Training  
**PSRs** – Privately Sponsored Refugees  
**SCELA** – Système coordonné d'évaluation linguistique et d'aiguillage  
**WLA** – Workplace Language Assessment

## Useful Websites

Achève - <https://achev.ca/>

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks – [www.language.ca](http://www.language.ca)

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada – <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship.html>

Citizenship division of the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training & Skills Development – <https://www.ontario.ca/page/immigrate-to-ontario>

# Special Thanks

Achēv and the Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) would like to thank MCIIT (currently the Citizenship Division of MLITSD) for funding and contributing to this project.

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## STUDENT FOCUS GROUPS

We would also like to thank the language training providers and students who participated in focus groups representing various backgrounds and language skill levels. The information gathered about their assessment experience helped to determine the content of this guide.

Conseil des écoles publiques de l'Est de l'Ontario (CÉPÉO) (Ottawa)

Joseph Brant Learning Centre  
(Brantford)

Muslim Community Services (Brampton)

Skills for Change (Toronto Central)

The Centre for Skills Development & Training (Burlington, Milton)

